

can provide a capital gains tax break. I realize this legislation may not help all in need, but it is an important piece of the relief puzzle.

I hope my colleagues will join me in their support of this bill. If they do, they will be joining several others concerned with the economic viability of the Nation's heartland.

TRIBUTE TO LITHUANIA

HON. MICHAEL P. FORBES

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 1997

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the country of Lithuania. In just a few days, on February 16, Lithuania will celebrate its sixth year as a truly free and independent country. Since proclaiming its independence Lithuania has implemented a Democratic policy. Democracy, for this country, is a vast change from its previous 50 years of forced annexation by the former Soviet Union.

Although it has been, to some degree, a struggling progression, the overall picture is a steady one with greater potential on the horizon. In the past 6 years, Lithuania has seen monumental revision from drafting its own constitution, holding elections for its own Parliament and President, to developing a market economy.

The old Soviet methodology and regularity of bureaucracy has dwindled almost to the point of extinction as privatization has taken a strong hold. Because of their privatization priority policy, 85 percent of state-owned enterprises have been transmitted to the private sector. In addition the development of a western-oriented program of reform regarding trade and banking has led to an increase in trade with western countries, gaining from just 15.3 percent in 1990 to over 60 percent in 1995.

Another indication of Lithuania's progression toward Democracy and a market economy is that about two-thirds of the economic product is now industrial. There has also been so much growth potential emerging that foreign interest and investment has increased substantially.

Just before the collapse of the Soviet regime in 1991 Soviet troops attacked Lithuania's capital city, Vilnius. During the initial invasion several Lithuanians were wounded, some resulting in fatalities. For those who perished, they will be remembered as the "Defenders of Freedom." I stand before you today to commend these defenders and all of Lithuania for what has become their common goal so eloquently stated by President Algiras Brazaukas, "Now all people have a common goal: to live in an independent and free country."

REFORM TERM LIMITS

HON. JO ANN EMERSON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 1997

Mrs. EMERSON. Mr. Speaker, term limit supporters across Missouri—like me—are rightfully disappointed that the vote on congressional term limits is doomed to failure. I am a cosponsor of a constitutional amend-

ment calling for tough, 12-year term limits for Senators and Representatives, alike. It had been my hope that a united stand for term limits would finally lead to real limits with teeth. On Wednesday, the House of Representatives will vote on term limits and it appears my vote in favor will be for naught, thanks to a problem that has grown out of control—division among conservative ranks.

Last November, voters in Missouri and eight other States approved so-called scarlet letter constitutional amendments. These scarlet letter amendments require Members of Congress from Missouri and the other affected States to vote for term limits of 6 years in the House and 12 in the Senate. If Members don't vote for these particular limits, or if Members vote for different limits, the phrase "disregarded voter instruction on term limits" will appear next to their names on the next ballot if they choose to seek re-election. Disregarding for a moment the fact that ballots will soon be cluttered with inaccurate information, this sounds like a good idea. Why not put a little muscle behind the campaign to enact term limits which, after all, are supported by 70 percent of Americans, ourselves included.

A not-so-funny thing happened on the way to the vote on term limits. As sure as the Mississippi flows south, the vote on term limits today will fail. It won't fail for lack of general term limit support, but will fail because of the handcuffs placed on the 30 Members of Congress who come from States where the scarlet letter initiative passed. Each State constitutional amendment—they are all different—requires that Members from those States vote for different versions of term limits. Even though term limit supporters garnered 227 votes in the last Congress (it takes two-thirds of Congress, or 290 votes, to pass a constitutional amendment) and even though more supporters of term limits were elected to Congress last November, there's no chance that tough, commonsense congressional limits can not pass. Missouri's scarlet letter amendment has joined with similar, but different, amendments in other States and backfired against the shared goal of conservatives to enact tough term limits.

So how did this mess come to be? Most Missouri voters will probably be surprised to learn that the scarlet letter amendment, when it appeared on the ballot in the voting booth, deceptively asked if voters support term limits, but did not state that Members would be prohibited from supporting other term limit bills if the three term limit fails. In fact, the fine print of this amendment explicitly instructs Members to vote against all other term limit bills. Put simply, the amendment reburies limits of three terms in the House, or nothing at all.

With that in mind, I intend to vote for every single reasonable measure that would limit congressional terms to either 6, 8, 10 or 12 years when the House considers term limit legislation. I campaigned in support of term limits and intend to carry through on that commitment.

Term limit supporters should consider this farce. The scarlet letter will likely be invoked even if I vote for the 6-year term limit, which is certain to fail despite my support. The scarlet letter will be invoked simply because I later vote for a different term limit bill that has a realistic chance of passing.

As if that weren't enough, different versions of the scarlet letter laws passed in each of the

nine States. Thus, if Members from those States precisely follow those instructions, they must all vote for a different version of term limits—and against any others. It's the equivalent of asking the offensive line of the St. Louis Rams to sack their own quarterback each time they take to the field.

In the end, I will vote in favor of each and every serious term limit amendment brought before the House this week. If that means I invoke a misleading scarlet letter, then so be it. Those of us charged with the responsibility of dealing with the legislative agenda of the people on a practical basis are duty-bound to deliver what is feasible, and that includes term limits that stand a chance of passing Congress. We will never succeed in passing real term limits as long as outside groups continue to divide conservatives who support them. In our efforts to pass term limits with teeth, we should remember that when united, we win, when divided, we fail.

THE CROP INSURANCE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 1997

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 1997

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker I rise today to introduce a desperately needed piece of legislation, the Crop Insurance Improvement Act. This bill will restore fairness to the crop insurance system and make crop insurance a reasonable risk management tool for producers in North Dakota.

In my State farmers have suffered through three successive seasons of disastrous crop production and the fourth is already on its way. Abnormally high rainfall and wet conditions have prevented farmers from planting crops and have ruined crops that were planted. Through no fault of their own, these farmers have seen their crops destroyed and livelihood threatened year after year.

Now producers are being told that they will have to pay higher premiums for lower coverage as a result of these losses. Many producers are now faced with unaffordable insurance bills that provide little coverage. Nothing could be more unfair to the farmers of my State or any farmers who have suffered crop losses due to natural disasters.

Last year 172 producers in North Dakota were placed on the nonstandard classification list following 3 years of successive losses. Nonstandard classification results in higher premiums and lower coverage. This year, hundreds more producers face a similar situation because of the continued disaster. Even if the flooding and wet conditions were to stop today, many farmers would not be able to afford the crop insurance they need because of losses in previous disaster years.

My bill would ease this situation and restore some fairness and sanity to the crop insurance program. The Crop Insurance Improvement Act would provide exceptions for producers farming in areas declared a disaster by the President or the Secretary of Agriculture. It would prevent the listing of producers on the nonstandard classification list if they had losses related to a major declared disaster.

This bill would also prevent FCIC from counting losses in disaster years in the calculation of insurable yields. Poor yields in

years of natural disaster should not affect a producer's future insurance. Disasters represent abnormal, uncontrollable forces of nature and should not cripple a farmer for years to come with higher insurance premiums and inadequate coverage.

The ultimate goal of the bill is to keep crop insurance as a viable risk management tool for our Nation's farmers. If producers cannot afford crop insurance, or if the insurance will not cover a reasonable yield, then we have left them without a safety net.

Participation in crop insurance has increased since Congress reformed the program in 1994. Farmers have taken more responsibility for their risk management and will have to take even more now that the price safety net has been removed by the 1996 farm bill. Now it is time to improve the program so that we are not slamming the door on a valuable tool responsible producers use to manage their risk. I encourage my colleagues to support this necessary and commonsense improvement in the crop insurance program.

**"FOUR POINTS OF THE COMPASS"
BALINT VAZSONYI'S DIRECTION
FOR AMERICA**

HON. GEORGE P. RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 13, 1997

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, my friend and adviser, Dr. Balint Vazsonyi, delivered a lecture today at the Heritage Foundation, which was entitled "Four Points of the Compass: Restoring America's Sense of Direction." The lecture drew a wide cross section of men and women who are in the forefront of Americans concerned about our constitutional underpinnings. Those taking part included Senator ROD GRAMS of Minnesota, who delivered an insightful evaluation of Dr. Vazsonyi's lecture, Matthew Spalding of the Heritage Foundation, and Daniel McDonald of the Potomac Foundation.

As many of our colleagues know, Dr. Vazsonyi's thesis is one to which I strongly subscribe. Indeed, I am pleased to acknowledge the significant role he has played in helping advance new America, the vision expression that we launched last year. That vision is about restoring civil society through structural reform that focuses on revitalizing society's nongovernment institutions—family, business, religious/civic.

Mr. Speaker, Balint Vazsonyi's lecture is recommended reading for all who are working to assure that government's grasp doesn't exceed its constitutional reach. I am pleased to make it part of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD at this point.

**FOUR POINTS OF THE COMPASS: RESTORING
AMERICA'S SENSE OF DIRECTION**

Although the press appeared not to notice, President Clinton, in his Inaugural Address, called for a new Constitution. He borrowed language from the Declaration of Independence where in 1776 Thomas Jefferson presented the argument for new government. On January 20th, 1997, Mr. Clinton proclaimed, "We need a new government for a new century." He proceeded to set forth all the things this new government would give the American people.

Today, I come before you to argue that we need just the opposite. We, at the Center for

the American Founding, believe that a tool is necessary to guide us back to the path of our existing Constitution. We offer this tool to the decision makers, legislators and judges of America and ask all of you to help us develop it to its full potential. Because it points the way, we think of it as a compass.

What kind of country will exert its best efforts for the benefit of all mankind? Or engage in war without expectation of gain? What kind of country makes it possible that a person who did not grow up in it feel sufficiently at home to step forward with a major initiative? What kind of country has long-time professionals come together to hear a relative novice with a foreign accent speak on national issues? What kind of country? A country which is one of a kind.

As we contemplate the future, it is essential that we keep in mind that America, indeed, is one of a kind. Some believe with all their heart that people, and their aspirations, are the same everywhere. This may be so. But the nation established here more than two hundred years ago has neither precedent nor a parallel in the known history of this planet. Not its capacity for success; not its capacity for strength; not its capacity for goodness. It is one of a kind.

One-of-a-kind. A big word. You hear it and think of Shakespeare. Or Beethoven. Or George Washington. We look at their work and try to understand what makes it so. It is a hopeless endeavor. But with America, there are definite ingredients we can identify quite easily: the rule of law, individual rights, guaranteed property and so forth. A funny thing, ingredients. We acknowledge their importance in all sorts of scenarios, yet ignore them when it comes to matters of life and death. If we eat something memorable, we want the recipe. With food, we know without the shadow of a doubt that the ingredients make the thing.

Chocolate ice cream, for example, takes chocolate, cream and sugar. If, instead, you use ground beef, mustard and "AI" sauce, you don't expect chocolate ice cream to come out of the process. Whatever else it will be, chocolate ice cream it will not be. Ice creams come in many varieties. America is one of a kind. Do we honestly expect it to remain America if the ingredients are changed?

Over the past decades, the Rule of Law has been displaced by something called "social justice." Group rights and arbitrary privileges make a mockery of the constitutional rights of the individual. Where not so long ago all Americans could feel secure in their right to acquire and hold property, government today is no longer discussing whether—only how much of it to confiscate, and how to redistribute it. As you see, the ingredients have already undergone drastic change. Is it reasonable to hope that America will nevertheless remain America?

And the greatest variety of assaults is launched against something I have come to refer to as "national identity." Now, I realize that some people might have a reaction to that phrase because the term has been used by others as a wedge. I use it as a magnet. As such, it is a necessity. Something needs to bind people together, especially when they have converged, and continue to converge upon a place from every corner of the globe.

Identity is about being similar or being different. Since our differences have been amply provided for by nature, we have to agree about those aspects of our lives which will make us similar. For the shared history which other nations have, Americans have successfully substituted a shared belief in, and adherence to, certain principles. A common language took the place of a shared culture. No state religion was established, but a

Bible-based morality taken for granted. Add to this a certain work ethic, an expectation of competence in your field of work (whether you split the atom or sweep the floor), a spirit of voluntary cooperation, insistence on choice, a fierce sense of independence—and you have the ingredients of the American identity. And, if you prefer to call it American character or, as George Washington, "national character," it will serve our purpose so long as we remain agreed about the ingredients. For it is these ingredients that have distinguished us from other societies, and enabled those who sweep the floor today to split the atom tomorrow.

Today, our nation's leaders are engaged in choosing a path to pursue. Yet, all along, we have had a path to follow. It is clearly pointed in the Declaration of Independence and our founders complemented it with a superb road map they called the Constitution of the United States. Add to this the glossary we know as The Federalist Papers and it is hard to see why and how we could have lost our sense of direction. But lost it we have. That is why we need a compass—the compass in the title of these remarks.

Between 1776 and 1791, our compass was calibrated to keep us on the path of betterment—as individuals and as a nation. We even had a kind of "North Star," a magnetic North, in what we call the Rule of Law. But instead, we now have rule by the lawmaker. Every member of the Executive, every member of the Judiciary has become a potential lawmaker and in most cases they use the potential to the hilt.

Yet the Rule of Law stands for the exact opposite. As its basic property, it places the fundamental tenets beyond the reach of politics and politicians. Whereas it confers legitimacy upon subsequent laws that spring from its eternal well, it denies legitimacy to all legislative maneuvers that corrupt its purpose. It holds the makers, executors and adjudicators of the law accountable at all times. Above all, it demands equal application to every man, woman and child. Within its own framework, a prescribed majority may amend the law. But as the law stands in any given moment, it must be applied equally. If accomplished, nothing in the history of human societies can match the significance and magnificence of equality before the law.

The aspiration for equality before the law began with the Magna Carta or even earlier, in King Arthur's court, where knights sat at a round table. But it took Thomas Jefferson to etch the concept in the minds of freedom-loving people everywhere, more permanently than posterity could have etched the words in the marble of the Jefferson Memorial. And even then, after those immortal words of the Declaration of Independence had been written, it took most of two centuries before America, land of the many miracles, almost made it a reality for the first time ever.

But it was not to be. The rule of law, our only alternative to the law of the jungle, came under attack just as it was about to triumph. The attacker displayed the irresistible charm of the temptress, the armament of the enraged avenger, dressed itself in intoxicating clichés, and wore the insignia of the highest institutions of learning. It called itself "social justice."

Let me make it clear: I do not speak of social conscience. That is a frame of mind, a noble sentiment, a measure of civilization. Precisely for that reason, while it has everything to do with our conduct, it has nothing whatever to do with laws. "Social justice," on the other hand, aims at the heart of our legal system by setting an unattainable goal, by fueling discontent, by insinuating a permanent state of hopelessness.

But above all, social justice is unacceptable as the basis for a stable society because,